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SCIENCE

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THE APPEAL OF THE NATURAL SCIENCES¹

AGAIN the revolving year brings us all together at the opening of the autumn term. And yet not all—no university gathering is ever the same in two successive years. Since last September a thousand and yet again a half a thousand earnest young men and women have left us and have gone to all quarters of the earth to take their places in the world's work. To us who remain their faces have become a cherished memory; their future efforts are a subject of confident trust. Twelve months before there were a thousand and less than half a thousand; and as our minds run backward over the earlier years we recall the time when the departing graduates were numbered by hundreds, still earlier by tens; at the very outset, in the small beginnings of colonial days by units. At this the opening of the one hundred and sixtieth year of the institution's life, we hark back to the past more naturally than we would were the year drawing to its close. At Commencement, eyes are turned toward the future; but as we gather ourselves together for renewed effort eyes may be most fittingly for the moment turned toward the past.

It seems a far cry from the Columbia of to-day to the Kings College of 1754, hovered under the wings of Trinity Church in the little colonial town. Much has happened meanwhile and vast changes in conditions, in population and in magnitudes of all sorts have come to pass. But the succession is unbroken. We recognize ourselves to be the end members in a long and honorable line. We may for the moment put our-

¹ Address delivered at the opening exercises of Columbia University, September 24, 1913.